

15
SECOND

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

ARGYLL DISTRICT ASYLUM

FOR THE INSANE.

1865.

GLASGOW:

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REPORT
OF THE
DISTRICT LUNACY BOARD
TO THE
COMMISSIONERS OF SUPPLY
FOR THE COUNTY OF ARGYLL.

IN presenting to the Commissioners of Supply the Annual Report of their Medical Superintendent, there is one subject to which the District Board desire to invite special attention.

The District Board having had under consideration the expediency of removing a certain number of the incurable and harmless patients from the asylum to private dwellings, it was resolved, after consultation between the Deputy Commissioners in Lunacy and Dr. Sibbald, to make an experiment in that direction.

The District Board were moved by two considerations. *First*, by a desire to benefit the patients; and *Secondly*, by a desire to consult the interest of the parishes chargeable with the maintenance of such patients, and the general interest of the County.

In so far as the patients selected for removal to private dwellings are concerned, there cannot exist a doubt as to the beneficial nature of the change from the restraint of an asylum to the comparative freedom of a private house.

It has been well observed by Dr. Mitchell, one of the Deputy Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, in his able and exhaustive treatise on “the Insane in Private Dwellings,” that “Many
“lunatics are quite capable of appreciating the amenities of
“domestic life, and of enjoying the individuality which they

“acquire in private houses, and which they cannot have while
 “part of the population of a large asylum. Though their
 “mental powers may be deficient, or their intelligence perverted,
 “many of them still have ‘warm affections, and are capable
 “‘of deriving pleasures from social intercourse.’”—(*Rep. Gen.
 Board of Lun. for Scotland*, II. 43). “To such patients the
 “weary monotony of prolonged confinement is irksome, and
 “injurious at least to their bodily health, if we may judge by
 “the improved physical wellbeing and greater chance of living,
 “which we know they acquire by removal to more natural or
 “less artificial surroundings. But it is probably injurious also
 “to their mental health, for it is a generally received opinion
 “now, that ‘all great aggregations of permanently diseased
 “‘minds is an evil, which, as much as possible should be avoided,
 “‘as their tendency is undoubtedly to lower and degrade each
 “‘constituent member of the mass.’”—(*Op. Cit.* II. 41). It is
 clear, therefore, “That continued confinement may be an injury
 “to many of those patients for whom the appliances of an asylum
 “have ceased to be necessary, and that, under proper arrange-
 “ments, their removal may become the source of increased
 “comfort, happiness and general wellbeing.”

The Parochial Board of the City of Edinburgh and its
 Inspector have taken the initiative in the experiment of boarding
 incurable and harmless lunatics in private houses. Suitable
 accommodation at Edinburgh not being available, most of their
 patients have been boarded in the parish of Kennoway in Fife-
 shire; and of their condition there, Dr. Mitchell expresses himself
 in the following terms:—“Almost without exception the patients
 “thus disposed of are found to be contented and happy, and
 “to exhibit an improvement in their physical health. They
 “are treated as members of the family, occupy the same sitting-
 “room, and eat at the same table. They are clothed as the
 “villagers general are, and most of them go regularly to church.
 “They send and receive letters, and are visited by their friends,
 “and occasionally by the clergymen of the locality. They have
 “tea parties and pic-nics. Their occupations are varied, and
 “usually such as they have been accustomed to. Some are
 “chiefly employed in ordinary household work, and others in

“ knitting and sewing. One acts as nurse to her fellow patient,
 “ who is old and infirm. Some of the men do field work and
 “ look after cattle, and one was met returning from a neigh-
 “ bouring village to which he had been sent with butter and eggs.
 “ In short, their time is spent in occupations of a quiet and
 “ common-place character, which are not, however, the less
 “ useful or proper on that account. Care has been taken to
 “ secure comfortable sleeping accommodation, and each patient
 “ has been provided with a separate bed. As a rule, the best
 “ room in the house has been made the sleeping room, and it
 “ is generally snugly and fully furnished. In one or two cases
 “ indeed, the bed-room is quite equal, as regards comfort, to
 “ what is furnished to better class asylum patients. The Guar-
 “ dians are persons reputedly of good character, and without
 “ any such employment as would take them from home. The
 “ common remuneration is 5s. per week, body clothing not
 “ included.

It is clear that the parishes to which the selected patients belong
 have a very substantial interest in the success of the experiment.
 For in as much as the cost of maintenance of each patient in the
 Argyll District Asylum ranges between 9s. and 10s. a week, the
 cost of maintenance, exclusive of clothing, in a private dwelling
 will not exceed 5s. a week.

As regards the saving to the county, in the matter of Asylum
 accommodation, it is unnecessary to offer any remark on a point
 so obvious.

It is believed that the District Asylum is sufficient for the
 accommodation of all patients who are amenable to curative
 treatment, or who are dangerous to themselves or to society.

The primary object of an Asylum is, undoubtedly, the cure of the
 Insane, and when it is ascertained by the Medical Superintendent
 that a patient is incurable, and that he or she is not dangerous,
 from that moment he or she becomes a fit subject for removal
 to a private dwelling or to the lunatic wards of a poorhouse.

It will be understood, however, that it is only when suitable
 accommodation cannot be found in private dwellings that recourse
 is to be had to poorhouses.

There are two reasons why a private dwelling is preferable to

a poorhouse. In the first place, a harmless idiot who has never injured any one, and is not likely to do so, is entitled to as large a measure of freedom and of innocent enjoyment as may be practicable in the circumstances. In the second place, the parish liable for his or her maintenance is entitled to the saving that accrues from the economy of a private dwelling as compared with the far heavier cost of a poorhouse.

Assuming that it will not be contested that the cure of the Insane is the primary object of an Asylum, and that no inmate ought to be retained therein who is incurable unless he or she shall be dangerous, there remains the important question whether there be any sufficient reason why all incurable and harmless patients should not be forthwith removed to private dwellings, or to the lunatic wards of poorhouses.

The only difficulty that is anticipated is one the disposal of which rests with parochial boards. If such boards shall determine to act liberally by providing accommodation and allowances sufficient and satisfactory to the General Board of Lunacy, the experiment may be carried out without delay and with every prospect of success. But if parochial boards shall seek, through an unwise economy, to reduce the allowances for board and surveillance below 5s. a week, exclusive of clothing, in the case of each patient, it is feared that the General Board will feel themselves constrained to refuse to certify the adequacy of the accommodation, and the result will be that patients will either be returned to the Asylum or will not be allowed to quit it, until satisfactory accommodation shall be provided for them in private dwellings or in the lunatic wards of poorhouses; and in the meantime the recalcitrant parishes will be liable to be charged 9s. or 10s. for each patient inside the Asylum, because they have grudged to pay 5s. outside, and the patients themselves will suffer under an amount of restraint which in their case is unnecessary and injurious. It is very desirable that some expression of the County shall be allowed to go forth for the information and guidance of parochial boards on a subject of so much importance to the patients who are likely to be selected for removal to private dwellings—to the parishes chargeable with the maintenance of such patients—and to the County at large.

If the Commisioners of Supply shall be of opinion that the sum of 5s. a week, exclusive of clothing, is not an excessive allowance for each patient, and will give formal expression to that opinion, it is thought that no parochial board in the County will hesitate to assent to a suggestion so reasonable, and so well calculated to satisfy all the interests involved in this important question.

Should that result be effected, the incurable and harmless patients, released from unnecessary restraint, will be removed to private houses where they will enjoy all the comforts of which their unhappy condition is susceptible—the parishes to which they are chargeable will be relieved of nearly one-half the cost of Asylum treatment—the County will be saved the expense of additional Asylum buildings—and the wards vacated by the outgoing patients will become available for patients who, if sent to the Asylum on the disclosure of the first symptom of insanity, will have all the chances of recovery which medical skill and kindness can afford.

It cannot be too strongly impressed on parochial boards, or on the relatives of those afflicted with mental alienation that, as in the case of bodily ailments, it is on its first manifestation that the malady is most amenable to curative treatment, and that a case which might have been successfully dealt with at an early stage may, if neglected, speedily pass into the stage of chronic and hopeless insanity.

In terms of the resolution passed at the General Meeting of 30th April, 1864, a statement of the Revenue and Expenditure for the current year was sent to each Commissioner of Supply on 20th ultimo.

The Board considers that the Assessment for the ensuing year should be £2,500 apportioned on the County and Burghs.

ANGUS FLETCHER.
ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.
JOHN RAMSAY.
COLIN G. CAMPBELL.
JOHN BEITH, JUN.

1st May, 1865.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1865.

I.—MAINTENANCE, EXPENSES AND SALARIES.

INCOME.

RECEIVED FROM PARISHES FOR BOARD OF PATIENTS, ...	£2,990	0	6
ARREARS OF BOARD PAID, ...	210	4	6
VALUE OF STOCK IN STORE, 31ST MARCH, 1864, ...	300	0	0
	<u>£3,500</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>

EXPENDITURE.

PROVISIONS—									
Butcher Meat, ...	£351	13	6						
Fish, ...	24	11	0½						
Flour and Oatmeal, ...	76	0	1						
Barley and Rice, ...	26	12	9						
Tea, Coffee, &c., ...	60	3	7						
Sugar and Treacle, ...	52	12	10						
Cheese, Eggs, &c., ...	9	7	5						
Butter, ...	83	17	2						
Sundry Groceries, ...	15	2	7						
Potatoes and other Vegetables, ...	56	11	0						
Bread, ...	187	5	0						
Milk, ...	124	12	4						
								£1,068	9 3½
MEDICINES, &c.—									
Medicine, ...	£9	5	10						
Malt and Spirituous Liquors, ...	45	5	5						
Tobacco and Snuff, ...	19	15	4						
								74	6 7
HOUSE AND OTHER EXPENSES—									
Fuel, ...	£172	10	3						
Light, ...	108	0	1						
Soap, Soda, &c., ...	38	1	10						
Earthenware and Glass, ...	9	17	10						
Stationery, Printing, Postage, &c., ...	33	8	10						
Books and Amusements, ...	15	16	5						
Freight and Cartage, ...	27	17	6						
Incidental Expenses, ...	25	13	4						
General Furnishings, ...	94	1	6						
Decrease in Value of Furnishings in Store, ...	15	0	0						
								540	7 7
CLOTHING, ...									
Decrease in Value of Clothing in Store, ...	£140	8	11						
	120	0	0						
								260	8 11
SALARIES AND WAGES, ...								619	8 9
REPAYMENT, ...								1	1 0
VALUE OF STOCK IN STORE, 31ST MARCH, 1865, ...								165	0 0
								<u>£2,729</u>	<u>2 1½</u>
SURPLUS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE, ...								771	2 10½
								<u>£3,500.</u>	<u>5 0</u>

II.—ERECTING, FITTING-UP, &c.

INCOME.

ASSESSMENT IMPOSED 14TH JULY, 1864, ...	£2,500	0	0
LESS—ACCOUNTS UNPAID, APRIL, 1864, ...	1,065	17	0
			£1,434 3 0
ARREARS OF ASSESSMENT OF PREVIOUS YEAR, ...		25	12 8
RECEIVED FROM FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY, ...		76	10 5
PETTY RECEIPTS, ...		25	0 0
PAID BY LOCHGILPHEAD POORHOUSE, ...		100	0 0
DUE BY Do. Do.		111	15 8
PRODUCE FROM FARM CHARGED AGAINST MAINTENANCE ACCOUNT, ...		136	4 8
IN BANK TO CREDIT OF MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT'S ACCOUNT, ...		45	14 6
			£1,955 0 11

EXPENDITURE.

ADDITIONS AND REPAIRS TO BUILDING, ...	£1,004	4	9
OUT-DOOR IMPROVEMENTS, ...	289	9	7½
FEU DUTY AND TAXES, ...	215	6	4
INSTALMENTS ON LOANS, ...	533	6	8
INTEREST ON LOANS AND BANK ACCOUNT, ...	734	7	2
OUTLAY ON FARM AND GARDEN, ...	301	18	0
REPAYMENTS, ...	2	16	11
			£3,081 9 5½
BALANCE AGAINST ASSESSMENT, ...	1,126	8	6½
			£1,955 0 11

III.—LOANS FROM SCOTTISH EQUITABLE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

BALANCE AT 31ST MARCH, 1864, ...	£15,300	0	0
INSTALMENTS PAID, 11TH NOVEMBER, 1864, ...	533	6	8
BALANCE OF LOANS, ...	£14,766	13	4

STATE OF THE FUNDS.

BALANCE AGAINST ASSESSMENT, ...	£1,126	8	6½
LESS—SURPLUS INCOME FOR BOARD OF PATIENTS, ...	771	2	10½
DEFICIENCY, ...	£355	5	8
BALANCE DUE TO UNION BANK OF SCOTLAND, ...	£659	15	7
ARREARS, &C., TO BE RECOVERED:—			
Advances for Parishes, ...	£7	8	0
Board Outstanding, ...	185	6	3
Lochgilphead Poorhouse for Reservoirs, &c., ...	111	15	8
	304	9	11
	355	5	8

COST OF MAINTENANCE OF EACH PATIENT PER WEEK.

	S.	D.
PROVISIONS, ...	3	10½
MEDICINE, WINE, &C., ...	0	3¼
HOUSE EXPENSES, ...	1	11½
CLOTHING, ...	0	11½
SALARIES AND WAGES, ...	2	2½
	9	3¼
AVERAGE NUMBER RESIDENT, ...	105	8.
CHARGE TO PARISHES FOR YEAR 1865-66, ...	9s.	4d. PER WEEK.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT,
FOR THE YEAR 1864-65,

PRESENTED TO THE ARGYLL DISTRICT BOARD OF LUNACY.

THE Medical Superintendent has the honour of submitting to the District Board his Report for the past year. The statistical tables have been calculated as usual up to December 31st.

In the first table, which shows the general statistical results, it will be seen that the number resident at the close of the year exceeded the number at the close of the previous year by twenty-seven, and nearly approached the number for which the Asylum was erected. This increase has been gradual during the year; and in the month of January of the present year (1865) the number of male patients was sixty-three, and exceeded by four the accommodation for which their wing of the building had been constructed; the number of female patients was fifty-six, which was within four of the accommodation provided for them. Gradually increasing numbers.

In these circumstances, the Medical Superintendent brought the subject before the Meeting of the Board which took place in March. It was then evident from the character of the increase, that even at such a diminishing rate as might be hoped for, it would necessitate an addition to the Asylum to satisfy the requirements of the District unless some other mode of relief Steps taken to avoid overcrowding

could be obtained. In consequence of the discussion which arose as to the course which the District Board should adopt, a communication was made to the General Board of Lunacy, who directed their Deputy-Commissioners to proceed to Argyllshire to investigate particularly the amount of suitable accommodation to be obtained in private dwellings and poorhouses for the reception of cases selected from the harmless class in the Asylum. These gentlemen satisfied themselves that there is a very considerable amount of such accommodation to be obtained; and in consultation with them, the Medical Superintendent has in the meantime selected a few cases which appeared to be the most suitable for treatment in private dwellings. The Superintendent has, in the circumstances, refrained from carrying out the instructions which he had received regarding an increase to the Asylum.

By this means relief to the late overcrowding has been obtained; and, it is hoped, that by the aid of the General Board of Lunacy, such a number of the quieter patients may be annually removed as may prevent the necessity for any increase to the present size of the Asylum. There appears to be good reason for this belief, especially if suitable poorhouse accommodation be also made available.

Boarding
out a por-
tion of the
harmless
Insane.

The system of boarding out a portion of the harmless Insane is one which possesses many advantages. Even the most successful attempts to give a comfortable and homelike character to the arrangements of an Asylum fail to give contentment to a great number of the inmates. Their individual existences become lost in the common life of the institution. The sense of imprisonment is never wholly overcome; and the necessary but frequently irksome routine of a large institution, generally produces a certain amount of irritation. Where suitable accommodation in private dwellings can be obtained, such an arrangement is therefore desirable. But the success of this measure depends in a great degree on the character and circumstances of those to whose care

the patients are committed. Considerate treatment and gentleness of demeanour have a great influence even on the more unmanageable patients in an Asylum; and if combined on the part of the guardian with attention to cleanliness and health, they will be found all powerful with those who are suitable for being boarded with families. These conditions, however, require for their fulfilment that a liberal allowance should be made by Parochial Boards for the support of the patients; for it must always be kept in mind that good food and comfortable clothing are absolutely necessary to produce good humour and contentment in the weakened and disordered mind. Experience has already proved that an unwise economy in these allowances has the effect of deteriorating the condition of the patients, and of necessitating their speedy return to the less congenial and more expensive mode of life within the walls of an Asylum. The great risk to the experiment, therefore, is the possible desire of the Parochial authorities to place the patients at a cheap rate in unsuitable houses, and under unsuitable management.

In the second table the classification of the different forms of mental disease in those admitted during the year is given; and it exhibits the usual proportions of the various classes.

The third table shows the supposed causes which have produced insanity in those cases which were not transferred from other asylums, as far as they can be ascertained. Among these it will be observed that the attack has been brought on in two cases by injudicious removal from asylum treatment. In one case the patient was discharged from another asylum, but a few days after her discharge the symptoms became so unfavourable that she had to be sent immediately to an asylum again. In the other case, the patient was removed from your asylum when she was apparently progressing favourably towards recovery. The Medical Superintendent stated to the

Causes of
Insanity.

Injudicious
removals
from
Asylum
treatment.

friends of the patient in the strongest terms his disapproval of the removal; but they removed her from the poor roll and took the care of her into their own hands, thus rendering any opposition on the part of the Superintendent powerless. A fortnight after her removal she had become so much worse that an order for her admission was again obtained, and she was sent back to the asylum worse than on her previous admission. On this occasion no treatment proved of any avail, and the disease gradually progressed till after a few months it resulted in death. The Medical Superintendent thinks it right that this occurrence should be made known in the hope that it may help to prevent similar misfortunes in future.

Importance
of early
treatment
in every
case.

The fourth table shows the duration of insanity previous to the admission of the patients to the asylum. It is certain, however, that in several cases the statements furnished to the Superintendent on the admission papers are inaccurate on this point. Some patients were admitted whose illness was dated from a few weeks previous, though the condition of the patient showed that the disease had existed for a much longer period. It is impossible to insist too strongly on the fact that asylum treatment becomes less and less useful in promoting recovery as the duration of insanity previous to admission increases. Of those admitted during the year two males recovered. In one the disease had only lasted a few weeks previous to admission; and in the other considerable improvement had been produced by early treatment in another institution before his admission to your asylum.

The fifth table shows the occupations of the patients admitted during the year.

In the sixth table their social condition is given; and, as usual, the greater number of cases occurred amongst the unmarried of both sexes.

The last table gives the ages of those admitted.

Health of
Inmates.

The health of the inmates has again been very satisfactory. The number of deaths has been under six per cent. of the average daily number resident; and there has been

very little sickness in the institution except those chronic ailments from which, in many cases, the insanity is produced.

Ten patients have been discharged during the year. Of these, five had recovered; in four, their condition was decidedly improved; and in one no change for the better had taken place.

Everything which the District Board ordered for the improvement of the appearance of the grounds was brought to a close last year. The exercise garden for the female patients is still in an unsatisfactory state, but it is hoped that the male patients may be able to do a good deal towards its improvement during the present year. Exercise Grounds.

The garden and farm have now been in working order for a year, and have afforded much useful and profitable labour to the male patients. Garden.

The general arrangements of the asylum have been found in practice to be well suited for their purpose. The dietary has been found to be ample, though not more liberal than a due regard to the requirements of the insane demands.

The Report by Sir James Coxe on the condition of the asylum is given in the appendix; and the Medical Superintendent begs leave to refer the Board to it as showing the satisfactory management of the establishment.

It has been found, as was anticipated, that the expense of boarding the patients has not been so great during the past year as it was during the period immediately following the opening of the asylum. Cost of Maintenance.

From 31st March 1864, to 31st March 1865, the cost of maintenance was as follows :—

				For each inmate per Week.		
Provisions, ...	£1068	9	3	£0	3	10 $\frac{3}{8}$
Medicine, Wine, &c.,...	74	6	7	0	0	3 $\frac{2}{8}$
House Expenses, ...	540	7	7	0	1	11 $\frac{3}{8}$
Clothing, ...	260	8	11	0	0	11 $\frac{3}{8}$
Salaries and Wages, ...	618	2	9	0	2	2 $\frac{7}{8}$
	£2563	1	1	£0	9	3 $\frac{1}{4}$

The manner in which Mr. MacLeod, Miss Graham, and the attendants and servants under their superintendence, have conducted the work of the institution has been highly satisfactory, and the Medical Superintendent has to thank them for the interest which they have displayed in its efficiency.

JOHN SIBBALD, M.D.,
Medical Superintendent.

April, 1865.

TABLE I.

GENERAL RESULTS OF THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DEC., 1864.

					Males.	Females.	TOTAL.
Remaining in Asylum, 31st Dec., 1863,					48	40	88
Transferred from other Asylums, -					6	19	15
Admitted from Parishes, - - -					14	14	28
Total number under treatment, - -					68	63	131
					M.	F.	T.
Discharged Recovered, -					2	3	5
,, Relieved, -					1	3	4
,, Unimproved, -					0	1	1
Died, - - - -					5	1	6
Decrease in number, - - -					8	8	16
Total number resident Dec. 31st, 1864,					60	55	115
Average daily number resident, 102·6.							

TABLE II.

FORMS OF MENTAL DISEASE IN THOSE ADMITTED.

					Males.	Females.	TOTAL.
Mania, subacute, - - - -					5	11	16
,, acute, - - - -					1	1	2
,, chronic, - - - -					0	1	1
,, remittent, - - - -					0	1	1
,, with epilepsy, - - - -					1	0	1
Melancholia, - - - -					2	0	2
Dementia, - - - -					4	5	9
,, with general paralysis, -					3	0	3
Delusional Insanity, - - -					3	3	6
Congenital Imbecility, - - -					1	1	2
					20	23	43

TABLE III.

SUPPOSED CAUSE OF DISEASE IN THOSE ADMITTED FROM
THEIR PARISHES.

	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.
Fall on the head, - - - -	2	0	2
Destitution, - - - -	0	1	1
Disease of Brain, with physical symptoms, -	2	0	2
Injudicious removal from Asylum } treatment, - - - - }	0	2	2
Change of Life, - - - -	0	1	1
Childbearing, - - - -	0	1	1
Congenital, - - - -	0	1	1
Strong Hereditary Influence, - -	1	1	2
Old Age, - - - -	1	0	1
Unknown, - - - -	8	7	15
	14	14	28

TABLE IV.

DURATION OF INSANITY PREVIOUS TO ADMISSION, AND NUMBER
DISMISSED RECOVERED.

Duration of Disease.	Transferred from Asylums.		Admitted from Parishes.		Already Dis-mitted Recovered.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Under 1 month,	1	0	4	2	0	0
„ 2 „	0	0	2	2	1	0
„ 3 „	0	0	1	1	0	0
„ 6 „	1	1	1	1	0	0
„ 1 year, -	1	0	1	2	1	0
„ 2 „	0	2	4	2	0	0
„ 3 „	0	1	0	0	0	0
„ 4 „	0	0	0	3	0	0
Above 4 „	2	5	1	0	0	0
Congenital, -	1	0	0	1	0	0
	6	9	14	14	2	0

TABLE V.

OCCUPATIONS OF THOSE ADMITTED.

Males.				Females.				
Baker,	-	..	-	1	Domestic Servants,	-	9	
Blacksmith,	-	-	-	1	Dressmaker,	-	1	
Butcher,	-	-	-	1	Engaged in Household			
Clerk,	-	-	-	1	Work,	-	9	
Dyke Builder,	-	-	-	1	Farm Servants,	-	2	
Farm Servants,				4	Hawker,	-	1	
Fisherman,	-	-	-	1	Shopkeeper,	-	1	
Foreman of Works,	-			1				
Gardener,	-	-	-	1				
Labourers,	-	-	-	3				
Painter,	-	-	-	1				
Policeman,	-	-	-	1				
Sailors,	-	-	-	2				
Weaver,	-	-	-	1				
				20				23

TABLE VI.

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THOSE ADMITTED.

						Males.	Females.	TOTAL.
Married, - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	6	6	12
Single, - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	12	15	27
Widowed, - - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	4
						20	23	43

TABLE VII.

AGES OF THOSE ADMITTED.

						Males.	Females.	TOTAL.
Above 10 years and under 20,	-	-				1	0	1
„ 20 „ „ 30,	-	-				5	2	7
„ 30 „ „ 40,	-	-				4	3	7
„ 40 „ „ 50,	-	-				5	8	13
„ 50 „ „ 60,	-	-				3	5	8
„ 60 „ „ 70,	-	-				1	5	6
„ 70 „ - -	-	-				1	0	1
						20	23	43

STAFF OF OFFICERS AND SERVANTS EMPLOYED
IN THE ARGYLL DISTRICT ASYLUM.

						Salaries and Wages £ Annum.		
Medical Superintendent,	-	-	-	-	-	£230	0	0
Steward,	-	-	-	-	-	52	0	0
Housekeeper,	-	-	-	-	-	32	0	0
Five Male Attendants,	-	-	-	-	-	128	0	0
Four Female Attendants,	-	-	-	-	-	34	0	0
Gardener,	-	-	-	-	-	32	0	0
Cook,	-	-	-	-	-	14	0	0
Laundress,	-	-	-	-	-	12	0	0
Housemaid,	-	-	-	-	-	11	0	0
						£545 0 0		

All, with the exception of the Medical Superintendent, receive board and washing in addition to their salary or wages.

ENTRY

BY THE

COMMISSIONER IN LUNACY.

8th September, 1864.

Since the visit of 12th April, 18 patients have been admitted; 3 have been discharged—2 permanently and 1 in probation; and 4 have died. The present numbers are 54 males and 50 females, being an increase of 4 males and 7 females since last inspection.

Of the patients admitted, 6 were transfers from other asylums, and 12 were received directly from their parishes. The increase in the number of asylum patients chargeable to the District is thus only 5. The mental affections of those admitted was mania in 8 cases; dementia in 4; delusional insanity in 4; general paralysis in 1; and idiocy in 1. The bodily health is described as good in 1 case, as average in 10, and as weak in 7.

Of the two patients permanently discharged, one had recovered, and one had improved sufficiently to be confided to the care of friends. From the large number of chronic cases brought from other asylums, where they had been accumulating for many years, the proportion of recoveries on the numbers resident must be very small; and the benefits of the asylum must, in the meantime, be looked for more in the general improvement of the condition of the insane than in the diminution of their numbers from recovery. Indeed it may be expected that the accumulation of chronic cases will continue, unless some regular system be adopted for the removal of those patients who may reasonably be considered harmless.

Of the patients who died all were males; and it is worthy of note that no death has taken place among the females since the house was opened. The causes of death are registered as general paralysis, and as organic disease of the brain, heart and kidneys, in one case respectively. The total mortality since the opening of the house is only 7, a result which speaks very favourably for the skill and care with which the establishment is conducted.

The house was found in a very satisfactory state, being scrupu-

lously clean, free from offensive odours, and generally in good order. As was anticipated, its working has brought some minor wants and defects to light; but the general arrangements and disposition of the buildings have been found convenient and comfortable. The day-rooms presented a cheerful homely appearance, which will be gradually increased as little articles of use or ornament are acquired; and, in the dormitories and single sleeping-rooms, the bedding was in every instance clean, in good condition, and in adequate quantity.

Out of doors the male airing court has been completed, but in that of the females a good deal of work remains to be done. The laying out of the general grounds is nearly finished. This has been done in a very complete and judicious manner; and as the operations involved could have been undertaken by the patients only in the course of many years, and even then executed in a far less perfect manner, it has been sound policy to take advantage at once of the beauty and amenity contingent on their completion.

Perfect tranquillity prevailed among the patients of both sexes, with the exception of one or two of the females who were temporarily excited by the inspection. No strong dresses were observed in use, and no one was found in seclusion, although it appears from the register that this mode of repression has been resorted to on twelve occasions—in the cases of six patients—since last visit, the longest period being for six days. The necessity for seclusion has no doubt been in a considerable degree due to the restricted use which, from their unfinished state, could be made of the airing courts, and also to the inexperience of the attendants. And in connection with this subject it has to be borne in mind that the difficulty of procuring experienced, or even untaught trustworthy attendants is considerably enhanced by the limited choice which a knowledge of Gaelic involves.

But men and women were comfortably clothed, and clean in person and dress; and their physical appearance gave indication of an adequate and appropriate diet. Dinner was served in the hall during the visit in an exceedingly comfortable manner; from eight to nine patients sitting at each table, and 45 males and 34 females being present. The meat is carved on the side table, and the food is helped according to the wishes or requirements of each patient.

The meal is taken deliberately in separate courses, knives and forks being used, and all the dishes and plates being of earthenware. This mode of serving the food has various advantages. In the first place, it has a tendency to inculcate good habits, and to promote self-control. In the second place, it diminishes waste; and, in the third place, it allows food of superior quality to be supplied without increasing the cost of maintenance. The cost of the food of the patients is still calculated to be about one-third of the total expense, or sixpence a day per head; but there is reason to hope that it may be reduced as supplies are derived from the asylum garden and grounds. On examination, the debris from the meals was found extremely moderate.

About twenty patients of each sex are habitually industrially employed, the men in out-door work and the women in the washing-house and laundry, and in sewing, knitting, and household work. All, with the exception of those who are infirm, take exercise in the general grounds; and many take frequent walks beyond the asylum bounds. Recreation and amusement are afforded by dancing, croquet, &c., and various periodicals are supplied in sufficient numbers for the wants of the patients. About 30 men and 24 women attend the ministrations of the chaplains.

All vegetables, with the exception of potatoes, are now fully supplied by the garden. The uncertain supply of milk, and the inconvenience to which this gave rise have rendered it necessary to purchase cows; and, indeed, from the remoteness of the asylum from markets it will be found advantageous to make it as independent as possible of extraneous sources of supply for all perishable articles of food.

In connection with the situation of the asylum, the Commissioner ventures to suggest that, as a certain degree of social intercourse with neighbours will enable the Medical Superintendent to continue, without undue strain, the satisfactory discharge of his responsible duties, it may be for the benefit of the establishment to afford him the means of keeping a horse or pony.

The various registers were found carefully and neatly kept.

It is scarcely necessary to add that the impressions produced by the inspection were very favourable.

(Signed)

JAMES COXE,

Commissioner in Lunacy.